

**ON
TRACK
OFF
ROAD**







Sand Pit...

The flat expanse of sand just outside the town of Lommel will look far more hectic than this in thirteen months when the 66th Motocross of Nations comes alive. It seems hard to imagine Lommel entertaining a Grand Prix in the same 2012 season, especially when plans are in place to increase even further the spectating areas and viewing banks. The clock starts now for the Flemish... Photo by Ray Archer







MotoGP


Out of the blue...

Not Casey Stoner's 28th Grand Prix victory and fifth from ten races this year that is but the fine Californian setting of Laguna Seca that provided scope for some atmospheric photographs. The short and tight track, full of heat haze, saw the leaders on a twitchy limit and was gripping stuff...

Photo by Honda Pro Images







Out of the shade...

A second win on the bounce for Rockstar Makita Suzuki's Ryan Dungey – this time in title rival Ryan Villopoto's scenic backyard of Washougal – has closed up the AMA 450 class championship chase to nine points between three riders with Dungey second and just one mark behind 'RV'. Anything AMA Supercross can do, the Outdoors can match it seems... Photo by Steve Cox



AMA-MX



MX

GRAND PRIX OF LIMBURG

LOMMEL · JULY 31ST

MX1 winner: Tony Cairoli, KTM

MX2 winner: Jeffrey Herlings, KTM





SICILIAN SAND MASTERY

By Adam Wheeler, photos by Ray Archer



Lommel was rougher, meaner and slower for its fourth Grand Prix but that didn't stop Tony Cairoli – a Sicilian showing the best of the Benelux the fastest way to defeat sand – from notching his second victory in a row in Limburg and second on the trot after success in Latvia two weeks previously. The eleventh round of fifteen started another rush of races with five events in six weeks as the frantic 2011 calendar charges towards a

conclusion. Riders had a little under ten days to seriously prepare for the Belgian sand before then considering the slippery hard-pack of Loket (Czech Republic), hard soil of Matterley Basin (UK), same ground for Gaildorf (Germany) and hard-pack of Fermo (Italy). Rockstar Suzuki team owner Sylvain Geboers had advised Clement Desalle, 'with there being only two sandy GPs this year I told him it was better to focus on other type of terrain',



Roczen and Herlings treated the fans to a fine duel in the first MX2 moto that provided some of the best action in the category this year. The bigger bumps fell into the expert hands of Herlings in the second outing

so Lommel was very much the 'freak' event located at the door of the final corridor of the championship and it was understandable if not all of the riders were sand-sharp. In fact post-race comments veered along the lines of fatigue, tiredness and disbelief at the state of the course. 'The track was unbelievable in the second moto. It was almost impossible to open the gas in some places,' said Monster Energy Yamaha's David Philippaerts who struggled

with a twinged left knee. 'I have never seen the track like this before. It was more like enduro than motocross; very, very difficult,' added his team-mate Steven Frossard who was fifth overall. The third member of the Italian set-up, Gautier Paulin (fifth in MX2) was equally graphic. 'The track was changing into a row of bumps and you had to have a good rhythm. It [the track] was destroyed and the ramps of the jumps were like Trial!'

And fight he did. Clement Desalle keeps focused to get back on the GP podium



All over for a disbelieving Rui Goncalves who tastes the bitter feeling of being so near yet so far



In contrast was Cairoli, but even the world champion had to acknowledge the difficulty of the terrain. 'I really love to ride here,' the Lommel resident commented. 'I had good speed but got maybe a bit over-confident in the second moto in the first four or five laps and lost control. In some places the sand was

very deep and loose. It was easy to lose your rhythm.'

Cairoli went 1-1 and now leads the series by a 'Grand Prix' (52 points). Despite a lengthy stint by Clement Desalle as leader of the first moto the only serious rival the KTM rider faced was himself, with a fall in either race meaning an

If in doubt about a result on the sand then simply look at Jeffrey Herlings' butt



Gautier Paulin and Tommy Searle clash while disputing MX2 positions behind the KTMs



afternoon of work to pass Frossad, Nagl, Bobryshev and then the Belgian in both sprints. Desalle admitted the hefty crash of team-mate Steve Ramon in the qualification heat on Saturday had affected his preparation for the race. But this was the best the Suzuki rider had been for a number of weeks and his runner-up slot

meant that he pulled a few world championship points on Frossard. 'Every rider knows a big crash like Steve's can happen at any time and it is something you try to put out of your head,' he said in a rare moment of candour in the press conference. 'When I saw him on the ground not moving for three laps yesterday it was hard to



Steven Frossard sailed on confidence and improved sand riding to almost snag a podium finish

take and makes you think about your life but we have to take it out of our minds in order to ride the bike again.' Ramon suffered spinal shock and slowly regained full feeling in his body by Saturday evening. Damaged nerves in his neck and a set of sore shoulders was the damage, even though he was kept in hospital for 24

hours for observation and then moved to another unit closer to his home on Monday. Reports from the team indicate that the Leatt-brace had really served its purpose. It was a scary accident and the fact that it could happen to a rider of Ramon's skill was also not lost on the observers of the crash scene as the qualifying race



Four wins, nine podiums and seven moto victories. No wonder Cairoli is smiling and looking ahead to a third consecutive MX1 title

was stopped (the first time I can remember that happening). Shaun Simpson (who was ninth overall for a decent weekend and good speed in the sand) was following the Suzuki rider at the time and crashed himself in the melee: 'He just got a shake-on, then lost control and the bike ejected him off and into the rut.'

There were a number of crashes during race-day. Evgeny Bobryshev lost the chance of another podium by going down on the first corner of the opening moto. He fired back to sixth from last but missed the box, giving the place to Max Nagl. The German revealed that he has been troubled by a spinal disc problem



Shaun Simpson has not had an easy maiden MX1 term and was the subject of a few rumours about a return to orange machinery for 2011. The Scot- who lives and works out of Belgium - was the picture of determination in the sand despite a couple of bad starts

since round two and would decide if he needed to end his season for an op after the event in the Czech Republic. Nagl's last trophy had been in the sand at Valkenswaard. Third place should have gone to Bobryshev's team-mate Rui Goncalves for what would have been his first rostrum appearance in MX1 but his Honda

expired with only corners remaining in the second moto.

MX2 was the usual KTM domain. The realm was expanded in Belgium thanks to the lonely rides to third of Jeremy Van Horebeek, who dedicated his improved sand capabilities to the tutorage of team manager Stefan Everts. Herlings (talking



Play time for the Monster Energy athletes with the 'Beach party' prior to Lommel



about a rib injury that appeared to hold a degree of fiction thanks to his customary excellent speed in the sand all weekend and reluctance to state the cause of the ailment) was beaten by Roczen in the first moto but a last lap crash by the German gave the upper-hand to the Dutchman to complete his sandy shutout of 2011.'The

track was so rough but I liked it,' the teenage winner said. 'Ken and I were both on the limit.' Roczen was placid after playing second-fiddle to Herlings for only the fourth time in the season. 'Jeffrey is the fastest MX2 rider in the world on sand, in MX2, and it was not too bad to finish second behind him.'



Max Anstie was extremely impressive across a circuit he actually knew but was frustrated by another fourth place (his fifth of 2011). Some better starts and that first trophy will be in the hands of the teenage Brit



Two KTMs at the front and on the inside for the first corner. Part of the explanation for the control so far in 2011

Some of Jeffrey Herlings' 'Army' didn't have far to go to watch the latest demonstration of sand brilliance





David Philippaerts (sporting some of Thor's new 2012 line) tries hard but has to compensate for a painful left knee





GETTING READY FOR THE BIG SHOW

By Adam Wheeler

Lommel was under a little more scrutiny than usual. With the recent confirmation that the site would host the Motocross of Nations for the first time in more than twenty years in 2012 (it was actually the Trophée des Nations in 1981) and the 2011 edition starting to build up momentum ahead of its September 18th fixture in France, some consideration of how the flat and largely featureless circuit would handle an event the size of the annual tournament was inevitable.

Lommel might be an acquired taste among the riders and the team technicians that secretly savour the punishing conditions for their race machinery but as a spectating experience...it still has some way to go. Part of the problem is connected with viewing possibilities and the inability of the crowd to appreciate no more than

a couple of turns in succession. This hasn't been a hitch in recent years thanks to lofty settings like Ernee, Matterley Basin, Donington Park, Franciacorta, and Thunder Valley.

The track – while almost unique in its character on the GP schedule – is also a heavy beast for such a competition. The sand was so deep and rough by the end of the second MX1 moto that the average lap-times had dropped by up to ten seconds in comparison to the first race. They were crawling around. David Philippaerts admitted it was difficult to even open the gas. The jumps carried minimal value in terms of being spectacular; the take-offs were described as 'trial' by Gautier Paulin. It is a different form of motocross but whether it is the most appropriate (or could be?) for a show like the Nations is a matter still up for debate.





CLASSIFICATION & WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

MX1 OVERALL RESULT

Riders

1	Tony Cairoli, ITA	KTM
2	Clement Desalle, BEL	Suzuki
3	Max Nagl, GER	KTM
4	Evgeny Bobryshev, RUS	Honda
5	Steven Frossard, FRA	Yamaha

MX2 OVERALL RESULT

Riders

1	Jeffrey Herlings, NED	KTM
2	Ken Roczen, GER	KTM
3	Jeremy Van Horebeek, BEL	KTM
4	Max Anstie, GBR	Kawasaki
5	Gautier Paulin, FRA	Yamaha

MX1 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS (AFTER 11 OF 15 ROUNDS)

Riders	Points
1 Tony Cairoli	466
2 Clement Desalle	414
3 Steven Frossard	403
4 Evgeny Bobryshev	369
5 Name Rider	349

MX2 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS (AFTER 11 OF 15 ROUNDS)

Riders	Points
1 Ken Roczen	490
2 Jeffrey Herlings	469
3 Tommy Searle	400
4 Gautier Paulin	373
5 Zach Osborne	295

KTM POISED FOR MX TECH IN MotoGP??

It is not a process used very often if hardly at all but it seems that KTM's immense superiority in motocross circles (MX2 titles since 2008 and set for another in 2011 and MX1 for the first time in 2010) will stretch in the cutting-edge technical sphere of MotoGP with the Austrian's Moto3 concept.

The new class will replace the 125cc category and the strict rules will involve regulated 250cc four-stroke engines. KTM plan to supply Kalex Engineering (already making a splash with Stefan Bradl in Moto2) with power plants and then produce their own motorcycle inside the walls of Mattighofen. It seems the formidable 250SX-F steered to MXGP success by the likes of Rattray, Musquin, Roczen and Herlings in recent years could have a bearing on how the bike for Moto3 will take shape and perform.

'Even though you will need a new engine concept, it [the crossover] does work in some ways,' commented KTM Motorsports Director Pit Beirer to OTOR. 'Knowledge from our motocross history can make it into the road race bike. For example the rule that the rev ceiling can be 14,000...we rev already quite a bit more than this in motocross so this means there are definitely parts that can be used from another discipline in that engine. From our experience in motocross through the last three years we have proved that we have one of the strongest 250cc four-stroke engines.' KTM won 22 Grands Prix on the asphalt with two-strokes between 2003 and 2008 before spiralling costs and the economic crisis forced a re-think and re-focus on their core off-road market. Now the factory is back on the grid. Why? 'The way Dorna has set up the regulations for

Moto3 has made it very attractive for us. It is a four-stroke class that starts from zero and it is fresh for everybody,' explains Beirer. 'The rules are quite strict, even though the regulation about providing same spec race engines is under heavy discussion at the moment with some keen to sell kits again. This is what we don't want. A good manufacturer needs to provide the same quality of engines as used by their race team to customers. We are interested in saying to customers and satellite squads 'look the race engine is strong, you can buy the same thing and go race' and we love that.'



One of the keys to survival this time around will be the localisation of the Moto3 project in-house. 'We stopped last time because we thought we were on the wrong path and we made mistakes in terms of organisation and how we built up the bike,' admits the German. 'The first thing we want to do is build the bike under our roof in Mattighofen and then get the right people who can focus 100% on the project.'

AUSTRIANS READY FOR DUNGEY

In the same chat with the always-amiable Beirer the former MXGP winner revealed that the company have been in dialogue with AMA MX Champion and MX of Nations victor Ryan Dungey.

This is hardly surprising after several weeks of rumours and also the fact that the rider's former mentor in the factory Suzuki team, Roger De Coster, has planted his feet so quickly in the expanding American arm of KTM that is controlled from Austria.

Beirer: 'There is a lot of ground to it and it is not a secret that we are trying to get it together but it's not done or confirmed.'

'Of course there is a friendship and relationship between Roger and Ryan and it is logical that this was the rider we needed to talk to. We talked to one more but for sure we won't have two or three top riders.'

'There are maybe five guys at the moment who can win at AMA Supercross and our dream is to get one of these. We have done our homework over the past two years to get the team, structure and workshop ready and the next big improvement is obvious and we are pushing hard to do it.'

Stefan Everts and Pit Beirer (right) plot the next stage of world domination



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PRESSING THE PRESS GANG

By Adam Wheeler

I read something which I thought was interesting on the website of British newspaper The Telegraph last week. Former Formula One Grand Prix winner David Coulthard cited McLaren driver Lewis Hamilton's recent victory at the Nurburgring in Germany as a result of a week's rest and respite from PR duty. To back up his opinion that the F1 drivers face a large degree of pressure, and demands on their time (he also alluded to their fortunate choice of profession), was a curious statistic that not a single racer had claimed their home grand prix since Felipe Massa somehow evaded the intense scrutiny of Sao Paulo to win the Brazilian round...in 2008.

My personal experience of working in F1 extends to a five minute interview slot with Coulthard himself, to chat about video games on camera, back in '99. Yes, they actually schedule interviews of five minutes. And that was pretty much all we got. The Scot himself was friendly professionalism personified and gave us exactly what we needed in that brief time.

Access to Formula one drivers generally might be at an absolute premium and it is hard to think of tougher media possibilities with any other sportsmen outside of the ego-inflated world of football but they are schooled and driven to hit the mark in terms of portraying image.

To compare motocross and formula one in any aspect seems an utterly pointless exercise, except for excitement or racing thrills in which case there is a clear winner.

However for motocross athletes with a short, explosive and often (at stages) painful career it can do no harm to study some of the world's most famous motorsport professionals to see how they acquit themselves in front of a camera, TV lens or webcam, or via Twitter, a Facebook fan page or simply their own website.

It would be doing a great many MX racers at the highest level a disservice to say that they don't do or think about these things but because - for the majority of cases - the 'clamour' isn't there, then many think it is not necessary.

To compare F1 and MX is pointless, except in one regard...

The onus on motocrossers to fulfil a PR role is marginal for most; a bike test here, dealer appearance there, signing sessions. While many are happy to perform any duties (and some are not) there are hardly any that actively seek it.

This is where two disciplines like F1 and MX go in completely different directions. In my opinion to raise the profile of the rider and therefore the brands he represents, and ultimately the sport, the base requirements of PR have to be hit and then the individual needs to take that extra step. It means more work off the track, but then how tough is a photoshoot now and again compared to forty minutes around Lommel?



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FEATURE

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EYE OF THE (SIBERIAN) TIGER...

By Adam Wheeler, Photos by Ray Archer

Last year Evgeny Bobryshev exploded from expected mid-pack obscurity to become the standout MX1 rookie of the FIM Motocross World Championship and also won the British crown. In the last issue I confessed to a hopeless misjudgement regarding Monster Energy Yamaha rider Steven Frossard's potential but I can feel a little more smug about the honest, open and humorous character that is 'Bobby' a 23 year old from Kondrovo near Moscow. In 2008 Evgeny was negotiating his first World Championship with a satellite Yamaha MX2 team and some powerful performances in point-scoring positions caught the eye (before he missed races through a visa complication and also hurt his ankle). Bobby already had a decent level of English thanks to some brave moves to western Europe once he had given-up dabbling with 125cc road racing.

I distinctly remember the Russian's reaction in that maiden season on approaching him for a bit of face-time. A shocked face, and 'you want to interview me?!' repost. It was an early sign of the modesty that he still retains in spades today. Photographer Ray Archer couldn't be more complimentary of the factory Honda World Motocross team rider in the ample time they spent playing/shooting in a boxing ring on the eve of the Grand Prix of Limburg in Lommel; where Bobby lives with his Russian girlfriend and would later take a trip to see if he'd rent brand-mate Ken De Dycker's apartment ('really nice! It has a Jacuzzi!').

Owner of five podium trophies this year and a piece of history by becoming the first Russian GP winner in thirty years after his success in Germany in July, Evgeny – currently fourth in the MX1 series – is again hot property and is Honda's golden boy for the next two seasons at least.

Three years ago you started out in MX2 and now you are beating riders like Cairoli and Desalle. Does it feel like a quick route?

I don't know, what do you think? Is it a short time to get to the top or a little bit long?

Well you had the ankle injury and then seemed to be better on the MX1 bike coming into 2010. You were the surprise last season. A first win was not too far away...

When I started Grands Prix I was travelling a lot back and forth to Russia to do the national series and also to sort out things like my visa so it was hard to make a full year and pick up the GP speed. I lost time basically and did it all a bit late...

...but if you think back to 2008 now...could you see yourself beating Cairoli and winning MX1 races?

I was not thinking about this to be honest. I just wanted to be faster than I was! Although it proved to be harder in MX2. At the end of 2009 I had make a decision about what to do and for some reason I felt like I wanted to achieve something in MX2 but the deal with CAS Honda came about and things started moving in a good way.



“I could not imagine only thinking about racing all the time. Just to race and train is crazy; you have to do something else”

2010 was a pivotal year for your career wasn't it? Winning the British Championship, leading Grands Prix. It was the time when you 'arrived'...

Yes, I was lucky with the CAS deal because it was a good team. I won the first race of the season at Little Silver in the UK and made some good results in the world championship. I took a lot of confidence. I also knew that if 2010 would be a bad season then I wouldn't know what to do next!

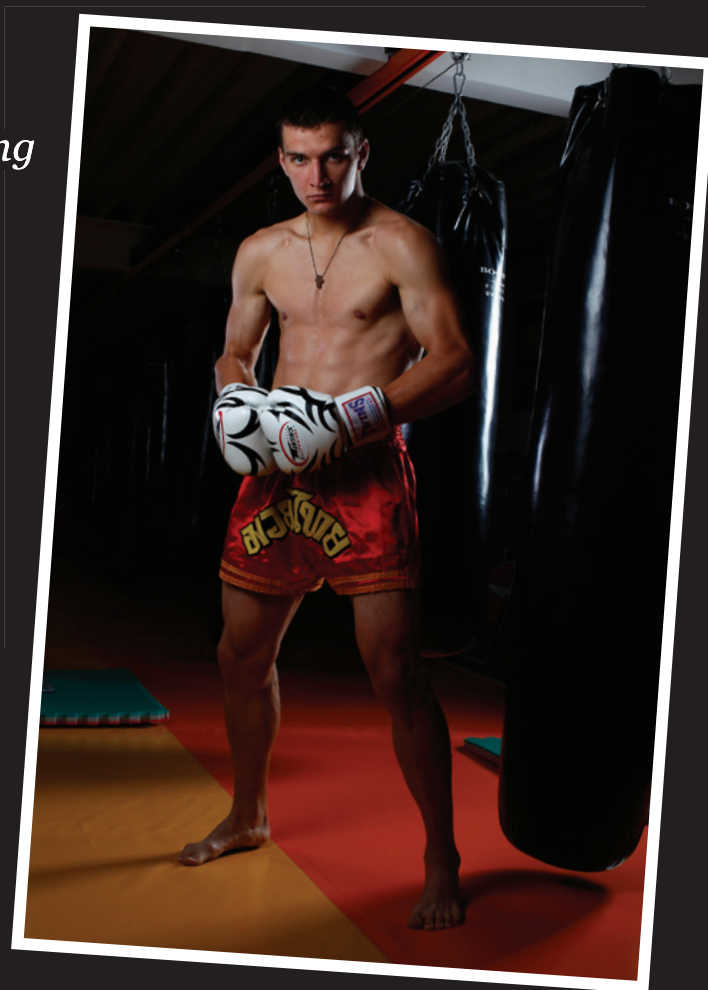
How have you changed as a rider in the last three years?

I think I changed a lot this year and by that I mean mentally and what I am doing on the bike. Before I was analysing my riding but still getting on and going crazy on the track and making many mistakes. I didn't see the longer picture of the season. Now I still give everything I have but I am also thinking about the next steps, even in the GP itself.

Practice for the Brazilian GP in 2010 and your cracked ribs injury was a low point. Was this a case of the old crazy rider still out in force?

No, no, it wasn't my fault. I had a couple of crashes before the accident but when I was on a flying lap in pre-qualifying I came over a jump and found a haybale on the landing. There was no flag or warning and I landed on it and hit the ground. I only knew about the bale once I had hit it! I only really remember the impact.

But what about coming back a week later at Silverstone for the penultimate round of the British



Championship that you were leading at the time. Wasn't that a bit crazy...?

Yes but I couldn't lose the championship; I was leading and I said to Neil Prince [CAS Honda Team Manager] that I had to try. So we taped up my chest and I took some painkillers. It was almost impossible but somehow I made good results and the CCM guys thought I was lying about the injury! The truth was that the painkillers wore off by the third moto and I had to take some more just to go to the gate. Looking back now it was pretty amazing...

You are now the leader of the factory team of the biggest motorcycle manufacturer in the world. Do you ever stop and check yourself on this achievement?

There is a lot of difference between a factory and a private team. You have to work more and there is more attention. It is difficult to give time to everybody and you don't want people thinking 'oh, he is a factory rider and keeps to himself'. I don't want that at all and I don't think I have changed much.



Do you like the bigger spotlight?

Yes, I like it. For example the kick-boxing shoot was great fun and I really enjoyed it. I never like to say 'no' to things. I see some riders who don't want to do this but I think you must have a good connection with the media. Just to race and train is crazy; you have to do something else.

There is an image of you as this happy-go-lucky guy and it has made you popular. Can it always be like this? What if you are pushing hard for the world championship next year?

Why not? It is who I am. I like being friendly and having jokes with the people. I could not imagine just thinking about the race all the time. It is not 'real life'. Going for the title will mean hard work but each GP will still be the same; you have to fight hard on the track, not in the paddock! I get nervous before a race and I think many people do but I am not scared of any other rider. I can switch on and off quite well. For sure if I have bad results then I can be in a bad mood, well, for a few minutes anyway!

Do you miss Russia?

For sure and in the past I was missing it so much that I had to go back every month. Now it is easier and the last time I returned was in May. I need results so I must stay in Belgium. I am here with my girlfriend and sometimes I go out with other riders, like the Leoks, but life is quite quiet. Back home I would be out late at night with friends and sleeping through the morning so it is not a good routine during the season!

What do you think about the other MX1 riders?

They are really friendly and I stop and talk to most of them. On a race weekend there is really only one subject to talk about but during the week the relationship is different. Like I said we don't hang out much...maybe that is a new project for me for the future!

There is a nice video of you online doing the Honda road race school at Silverstone. Do you like the asphalt?

Oh man, big time. It is something else, a real adrenaline rush with lots of speed. I want to do the same this year. I raced in 2004 but it was with a 125 and it was noisy and crazy. I prefer the 600 or 1000. Would I like to try road racing? Yeah! At the moment I ride a bit with a motocross style, with my elbows up and almost with my leg out! I think it is possible to get to a good level but I have no idea how long it would take.



How did you feel in Germany with that win?

Something exploded inside when I went over the finish line. Tony tried to pass me two corners from the finish and he sort of stopped in the turn. I looked over my shoulder and was like 'phew, just keep it on two wheels now'. It made a bit of history for Russia in motocross but I didn't celebrate afterwards. I actually started the drive to Latvia with Ivo [Steinbergs] through the night. I was really happy but I knew there were still six GPs to go and the next one was the following weekend. I knew I'd have time in October and November to have a good party.



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MotoGP

RED BULL U.S. GRAND PRIX

LAGUNA SECA • JULY 24TH

MotoGP winner: Casey Stoner, Honda



DESERT RATS

By Gavin Emmett

Photos by Monster Energy Europe/Milagro, www.yamahamotogp.com

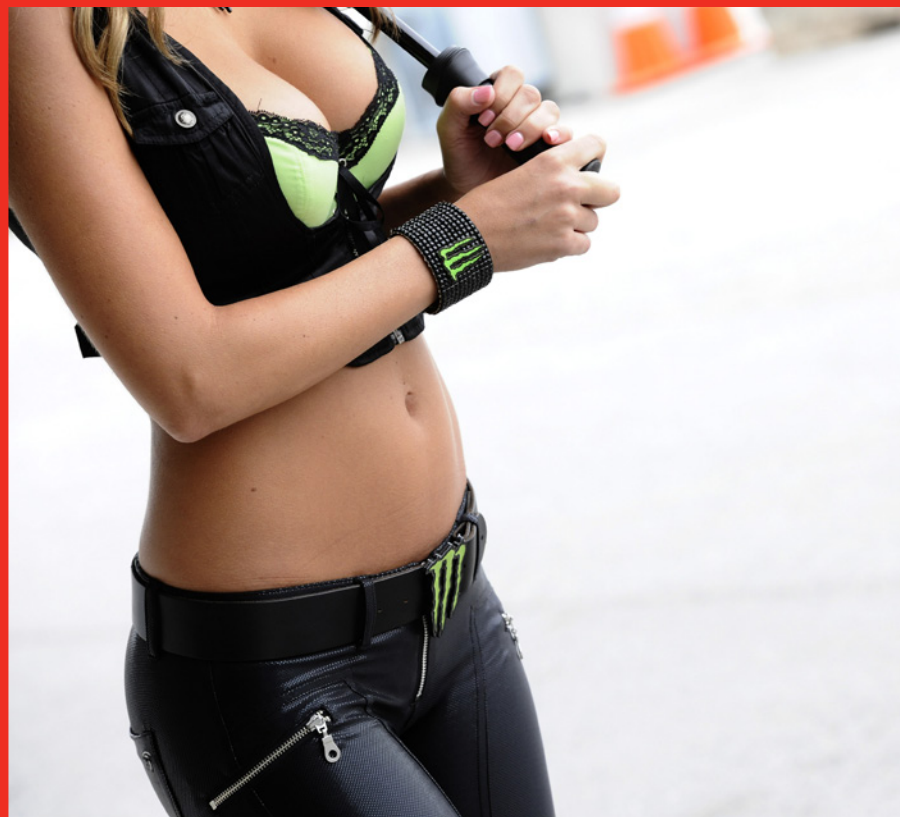
Honda Pro Images



After the excitement of the Sachsenring race, which had seen exciting battles throughout the field and a crucial last corner manoeuvre from Jorge Lorenzo on Casey Stoner to edge closer in the championship, there was every chance that Laguna Seca would have been unable to keep up the thrills.

Events at the Californian track can be processional with passing notoriously difficult, and apart from the epic battle between Rossi and Stoner in 2008 have often flattered to deceive. Qualifying second, championship leader Stoner admitted after practice that he was nothing but a 'one-lap wonder' and doubted his ability to challenge the reigning champ unless he managed to pull something out of the bag on race-day, but he did acknowledge that team-mate Dani Pedrosa may have something for his title rival.

Pedrosa is becoming a factor once more in the battle for race wins following his injury sagas, and after sampling top-step success in the German round, he made his usual burst off the line to head off Stoner into turn two, the first slow corner at the US track, to set about the chase of Lorenzo.





This was the longest that Lorenzo's lead stretched for 26 of 32 laps. The champion withstood a lot of pressure from the Hondas

The front three eventually pulled away in that order, whilst behind the lead group, Marco Simoncelli's misery continued with another crash trying to battle with Andrea Dovizioso. Having promised so much in the early part of 2011, Simoncelli's aggression seems to have been somewhat neutralised after the criticism by his peers.

Dovizioso looked comfortable in fourth throughout until a late salvo from Texan Ben Spies, who laboured to get past Valentino Rossi in the early stages – symptomatic of the difficulties of passing at Laguna. Rossi in turn eventually held off the challenge from Spies' compatriot Nicky Hayden, with a tense em-



Oh so pretty, but not quick enough. 2011 is swiftly turning into Ducati's transitional year

brace between the duo in the garage nothing more than disappointment on the American's part at being unable to improve on seventh in his home race.

The main excitement was left for the front, as Pedrosa continued to chip into Lorenzo's lead

but was never able to muster the strength to pass his compatriot, whilst Stoner had stuck to the rear of his Repsol Honda team-mate despite his predictions. There were moments where it seemed Pedrosa may be able to squeeze through, but eventually the Australian had seen enough and risked a pass into

Two horse race? Lorenzo and Stoner look to be having it their way in 2011. They share seven triumphs between them



the infamous Corkscrew. He admitted later he had no choice but to go through with the move, with Pedrosa braking later than on previous laps.

Stoner increased his pace all the time before tightening up on the rear wheel of Lorenzo into

the final corner of lap 26 and blasted out to level with the Yamaha riders across the line. The pass through turn one was as breathtaking as it was risky. 160mph, over a blind crest, on the white line, with a concrete wall just metres away to the outside, however Stoner made it stick as he braked into turn two and held off a

Ben Spies wins the race to fourth by the smallest margin and secures his best MotoGP result at Laguna Seca after an eighth and sixth in previous years



challenge from Lorenzo back in turn three. From that moment he never looked back and churned out fast laps as Lorenzo's plight faded with his practice fall injuries beginning to take their toll. Similarly Pedrosa settled for third, later admitting fatigue after the exertions of Sachsenring.

With a two-week summer break on the horizon, Lorenzo has time to lick his wounds before the run-in to Valencia. 20 points separate the top two with eight rounds remaining, and if the last two races are anything to go by, this one will go down to the wire.





Feeling the heat. The haze and relentless corners of Laguna permit some great images





Laguna always presents a great photo opp for Yamaha, and their 50th anniversary was further cause for the snappers to gather around the factory garage



LORENZO'S LUCK

By Gavin Emmett

This race could have been over before it had even begun when Jorge Lorenzo suffered a huge highside at the end of free practice on Saturday morning.

Once launch control has been engaged, the Yamaha M1 needs to be dropped down a gear for its traction control system to kick in to action.

After having practiced a start on the run up to turn five at the end of the session, Lorenzo held the bike in third gear before he was suddenly launched into the air without warning and landed heavily on his right-hand side.

Initially it looked like a season-wrecker, but thankfully Lorenzo returned in the afternoon to qualify on pole position and despite some nasty bruising to his right leg, seemingly had the necessary race pace for Sunday.

Another stretched-out Laguna affair looked to be on the cards, albeit exciting for the championship with just 15 points now separating the top two before the event.

Pramac's Randy de Puniet showed Lorenzo what could easily have been his fate, by crashing during qualifying and cracking vertebrae and his hip.



CLASSIFICATION & WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP



MotoGP RESULT		
Riders		
1	Casey Stoner, AUS	Honda
2	Jorge Lorenzo, SPA	Yamaha
3	Dani Pedrosa, SPA	Honda
4	Ben Spies, USA	Yamaha
5	Andrea Dovizioso, ITA	Honda

MotoGP CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS (AFTER 10 OF 18 ROUNDS)		
Riders		Points
1	Casey Stoner	193
2	Jorge Lorenzo	173
3	Andrea Dovizioso	143
4	Dani Pedrosa	110
5	Valentino Rossi	108



GREEN LIGHT FOR MOTEGI

The Japanese GP looks set to finally go ahead on October 2nd after an independent report into the safety levels of the Motegi area was delivered following the U.S. GP. Commissioned by the FIM/Dorna, the study was undertaken by Italian agency ARPA and examines the environmental risks of spending a week in the Motegi area – as the MotoGP paddock would for a race meet.

The conclusion drawn by the agency, as by many other international organisations including the World Health Organisation, are that “based on the estimated dose it can be said with no doubt that the radiation risk during the race event is negligible.”

Whether this will now convince riders such as Jorge Lorenzo and Casey Stoner, who had been adamant in their boycotting of the event, is another matter. Sources suggest that Honda, Suzuki and Ducati reiterated their expectation of their riders to attend the event, with news from Yamaha mysteriously absent.

Some Spanish media still firmly believe Lorenzo will not be swayed despite the findings of the report, but with the championship now on a knife-edge with 20 points separating him from Stoner with 8 rounds remaining, many others believe the draw may be too much and a subtle climbdown from the World Champion may be forthcoming.



HOPKINS RETURN CONFIRMED FOR BRNO

British Superbike rider and former MotoGP star John Hopkins will return to the premier MotoGP series alongside Alvaro Bautista at the Czech GP for Rizla Suzuki. Hopkins took Bautista's place in the Spanish GP due to injury, and earned a creditable tenth place, thus another ride on the bike at Brno.

He recently raced as a wildcard for Suzuki at the World Superbike round at Silverstone, taking his first ever pole in the championship before sealing fifth and seventh in the two races.

It is widely rumoured that Hopkins is set for a return to MotoGP next year, depending on the make-up of the Suzuki factory team in 2012.

It is still unclear whether the factory will enter the championship, having famously reduced its effort to a single bike this year. There are reports however of Nobuatsu Aoki testing a 1000cc prototype in Japan in recent weeks.

Even if Suzuki don't have a two-man team out on track next year, Hopkins could still be in line for a berth somewhere considering his experience and return to form, which would be an attractive proposition for the new CRT teams.



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NO FLAT-LINE FOR THE DOCTOR JUST YET...

By Gavin Emmett

I've received a hatful of emails and tweets over the last few weeks asking about the so-called 'demise' of Valentino Rossi and Ducati. They range from telling me that the nine-time World Champion is washed up, warning me that he's on the verge of breaking his Ducati contract to go it on his own in a breakaway team, or that he's close to dropping the curtain on his illustrious MotoGP career altogether.

There's not many sticking up for the Italian. Where have the Rossifumi all gone? Have they forgotten what 'The Doctor' is capable of so quickly?

I'm clearly not going to say that this has been a vintage year for the Italian. He has taken a solitary podium finish and has been beaten to the line by satellite riders on a couple of occasions. He still hasn't managed to qualify ahead of the third row, as if that mattered too much, and has made more changes to his Ducati Desmosedici than Lady Gaga has to her hairstyle.

Nonetheless Rossi is still fifth in the World Championship, has finished every race in the top nine (only twice out of the top six) and is ahead of team-mate Nicky Hayden, as well as the man who replaced him at Yamaha, Ben Spies.

It just goes to show what people expect from Rossi and the high standards he has set for himself that some are comparing his move to Ducati to that of Michael Schumacher to Mercedes. I'd like to refer those people back to Ducati

President Gabriele del Torchio's stirring speech on the Borgo Panigale factory's acquisition of Rossi at Brno one year ago now. In the discourse he stated the main aim of bringing Rossi to the factory, quite besides the leap in sales it produces, was not necessarily to win the title in 2011, but to develop a new bike around him for a major assault under the revised MotoGP regulations in 2012.

It goes to show what people expect of Rossi and his high standards...

I'd argue that the team are well on the way to achieving that aim, and in fact, with the amount of work and development now being thrust into improving the GP11.1 (essentially the GP12) they are even stealing a march on the other works teams in their preparations for the new rules. As they clearly did in 2007.





X GAMES 17 2011

LOS ANGELES · JULY 28-31

Best Whip: Jeremy Stenberg

Best Trick: Jackson Strong

MX Enduro X: Taddy Blazusiak

MX Speed & Style: Nate Adam

MX Freestyle: Nate Adams



X Games is a TV show. You have to keep that in mind when you're there shooting. Photographers are not a priority for them. The entire event is live on television. However, there's a second element that comes into play at X, too; ESPN is also a competitor for nearly every media outlet there covering their event. Because of this, photographers are relegated to a very few shooting areas, while snapper who are wearing ESPN vests can shoot from wherever they want.

It's not exactly a level playing field. Then again, neither is the actual playing field for the competitors, as it has become more and more

apparent over the years that the bigger your name, the more likely you are to win. It has never been truer than at X Games 17 during the Best Whip competition, where Aussie Jarryd McNeil and Frenchman Thomas Pages threw the craziest whips of anyone and finished third and fifth, respectively. But that was an event judged by the fans at home and in the arena.

Then there was the Speed & Style event that was won by Mike Mason. He took the chequered flag, which in racing usually means you win, but he lost once the trick scores were added into it, giving the gold medal to Nate Adams. Adams is a bigger name.



Thomas Pages,
shot by Steve Cox

Clement Desalle

Team Rockstar Energy

Suzuki World MX1

PH: Ray Archer

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AMA-MX

**WASHOUGAL
WASHINGTON · JULY 23RD**

**450 winner: Ryan Dungey, Suzuki
250 winner: Blake Baggett, Kawasaki**

DUNGEY DIGGING IT OUT FOR NO.2

Words and photos by Steve Cox



Blake Baggett cuts through the shade and dust for win number five of the season



The Monster Energy/Pro Circuit Kawasaki team is making a mockery of the 250cc class in this year's AMA Nationals. No other team has won a single moto so far this year, and just finding riders for other teams who have finished in a podium position in a single moto, or overall, is actually pretty tough.

At Washougal, once again, the team went 1-2-3 for the overall with Blake Baggett and Dean Wilson trading moto wins and Tyla Rattray going 2-2 for second overall in the fray.

But the craziest thing about the team's performance during the Nationals is that they



Dungey headed a podium double for the Suzuki crew, his second win in a row. 'The track was tough, slippery and challenging, so you had to be really patient with throttle control,' the reigning number one said...

nearly lost both titles in the AMA Supercross Series – east and west coast Lites titles. They actually conceded the East to Justin Barcia, who absolutely dominated the contest, and the West series came down to Vegas, and then the final lap of the last main event. The entire time, Eli Tomac – Barcia's GEICO Hon-

da teammate – had a shot at taking the title home. But Broc Tickle did what he needed to do to secure it. Still, to have both of those series as close as they were, no-one would've imagined that the Pro Circuit team would be this dominant outdoors.



Another painful stop-start to 2011 for Trey Canard who re-broke his leg



Big trees a plenty as RV tries to check-out from the first corner

'We started out strong at Anaheim 1, and it's not that we got complacent; we never do that,' said Pro Circuit's Bones Bacon. 'And I believe our guys are always the hardest working guys here – our riders and mechanics. But then when that happened [in supercross], it almost slipped through our fingers, and then I remem-

ber coming back from Hangtown and talking to Mitch, and I go, 'You know, we never got complacent – we never got lazy after supercross – but we've got to work harder now, because every other team out there is going to work harder now. So, if we just keep working hard we're going to get caught.' So, we just stepped



Facing the cameras and also the pressure...Villopoto keeps on track to repeat a 'Dungey double' of MX and SX in 2011



The background almost looks fake. Nothing dodgy about Brett Metcalfe's performance and first podium of 2011 though

up our game, which I didn't think was possible, but these guys just work their ass off. I mean, every day at the shop between practice bikes and getting race bikes done and going out testing... I went out last week with Broc [Tickle] and Blake [Baggett], just myself at Comp Edge and Glen Helen and took lap times and

just made sure they didn't have any problems because there was nobody else to go. Usually, we take a mechanic and I'll do a little bit of testing or whatever. But, just everybody at the shop pitches in. It's a team effort, 100-percent. They're burnt but we're having fun, too.' It's always fun when you're winning.



This shot of Villopoto could almost have been taken twenty years ago...



REED UNABLE TO BOUNCE BACK...YET

By Steve Cox

Chad Reed obviously wasn't as 'okay' after his spectacular Millville crash as he made out.

He definitely didn't look like himself at Washougal a week later.

He had a seventh-place finish in the first moto coming from behind after a poor start, and while it was a good ride, and the track was very tough to pass on, the truth is that it wasn't a 'Chad Reed' performance by any means. But in the second moto it became apparent that we weren't dealing with the same guy we'd seen in the series so far.

He started near the front but then actually lost a

spot to fellow Aussie Brett Metcalfe when the Suzuki rider passed Reed for third, and then made it stick, pulling away to take the podium spot.

Reed hasn't been a 'fourth-place guy' all year, and to see him go backward was even farther off of the mark of the kind of racer he's been during the 2011 outdoor chase.

It's always better to be the points leader, technically, but it could be that losing the points lead at Washougal could be exactly what Reed needed in order to give him the drive to finish out this championship strong. But we won't know what shape he is in either physically or mentally until Unadilla, at least.





Maybe Amy was alive
and well and spectating
in Washougal?

AMA-MX CLASSIFICATION & WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

AMA 450 OVERALL RESULT

Riders

1	Ryan Dungey, USA	Suzuki
2	Ryan Villopoto, USA	Kawasaki
3	Brett Metcalfe, USA	Suzuki
4	Chad Reed, AUS	Honda
5	Justin Brayton, USA	Yamaha

AMA 250 OVERALL RESULT

Riders

1	Blake Baggett, USA	Kawasaki
2	Tyla Rattray, USA	Kawasaki
3	Dean Wilson, GBR	Kawasaki
4	Kyle Cunningham, USA	Yamaha
5	Gareth Swanepoel, RSA	Yamaha

AMA 450 STANDINGS (AFTER 8 OF 12 ROUNDS)

Riders	Points
1 Ryan Villopoto	341
2 Ryan Dungey	340
3 Chad Reed	332
4 Brett Metcalfe	247
5 Kevin Windham	193

AMA 250 STANDINGS (AFTER 8 OF 12 ROUNDS)

Riders	Points
1 Dean Wilson	346
2 Tyla Rattray	333
3 Blake Baggett	329
4 Kyle Cunningham	233
5 Eli Tomac	201

D AMA-MX NEWS

LEG TWITCH

During Speed & Style on Saturday night at X Games, Jeremy “Twitch” Stenberg had a scary moment launching off the track’s biggest jump when he caught neutral just as he was going to attempt a backflip and bailed from the bike, landing feet-first right on the face of the landing ramp. He immediately crumpled in pain and looked to be holding his lower back – he has broken his back before – while Carey

Hart (who was leading the race when Stenberg went down) came to his aid, along with some EMTs, and eventually even Nate Adams. The diagnosis? One broken leg and one broken foot, according to reports. He drives for Hart’s Hart & Huntington off-road truck racing team in the Lucas Oil Off Road Racing Series, and he’s not going to be able to do so well with casts on both feet.



DIETRICH DROPS OUT OF ENDURO X

Two years ago, Ricky Dietrich was the American Endurocross Champion. Now, he's a full-time motocross racer racing for the Valli Motorsports Yamaha team. Still, with 10 spots open for the X Games Enduro X main event, he was a cert to make the main. But he didn't. What Dietrich did do was crash way too much and maybe go just a bit too fast. Endurocross is about speed - as all racing is - but more importantly it's about minimizing mistakes and Dietrich spent a lot of time at the X Games

making one mistake, then trying to go faster to make up for that mistake, causing another one, and so on and so forth. At the end of the night, he was watching the main event from the stands just like everyone else. Next weekend, he and his team-mate Nick Wey will be racing off-road trucks at the Lucas Oil Off Road Racing Series round at Glen Helen. At least if he gets in too much of a hurry there, he'll have a roll cage around him.



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AMA NATIONAL MX IN A DAY

By Steve Cox

It's rare that you can feel kind of like a rockstar as a photojournalist at motocross races, but at Washougal I kind of did. The bulk of the AMA Nationals are held thousands of miles away from southern California, where I live, and to get to them you have to travel east, which means you lose up to three hours in the air in addition to the time actually spent flying.

This makes flying in on the day of the event impossible.

However, at Washougal, I found a flight that landed me in Portland, Oregon – just across the border from Washington state, the closest airport to Washougal – at about 9 a.m. the day of the race, so I knew I'd miss some practice stuff, but it was worth it to try and be in-and-out.

But then came the 'out' part. I had to find a flight late enough on Saturday night to get me back home the same day. This is actually nearly impossible in the USA. For whatever reason, airlines take one night a week off from the late flights they would normally run, and that night comes on Saturday.

But I managed to find a flight that left at 7:45 p.m., which was kinda late. I booked them. And just as the final moto of the day crossed the finish line, I was in my rented Chevy Malibu and driving toward Portland International Airport. I made it in plenty of time to make my flight, too – or so I thought.

When I went to drop off my car, the person at Avis who scanned my car in and took the mile-

age down informed me that I hadn't driven the 50 miles, as I had told him, but I had actually done 1700 miles, according to his calculations. I proceeded to try and explain to him that it was impossible for me to have driven 1700 miles in the eight and a half hours I had the car, as even F1 cars couldn't pull something like that off, and he couldn't grasp my logic. Between the arguing near the car, then him taking me to the office to try and explain why I was going to have to pay so much to replace the few drops of gasoline that I had actually used, it took me over 15 minutes before he finally understood the nearly perfect math that said that in the time I had the car, I would've had to have AVERAGED 200 mph in order to reach the distance his computer indicated that I had driven.

I was sleeping in the same bed I had woke up in; that was pretty cool

Then, at the end of the conversation, he literally said that he never knew why they called the speed "miles per hour" here in the USA. Basically, he hadn't put the term together with its meaning.

I barely made my flight, but by that night I was sleeping in the same bed I had woken up in that morning, and that was pretty cool. And the 15-minute argument about why a Chevy Malibu isn't a bad car, but is definitely not capable of averaging 200 mph for over eight hours, was just icing on the cake.



BACKPAGE

Shot by Ray Archer

Check out: www.mx-life.tv for more





Girls
OF
MotoCross



'On-track Off-road' is a free, bi-weekly publication for the screen focused on bringing the latest perspectives on events, blogs and some of the very finest photography from the three worlds of the FIM Motocross World Championship, the AMA Motocross and Supercross series' and MotoGP. 'On-track Off-road' will be published online at www.ontrackoffroad.com every other Tuesday. To receive an email notification that a new issue available with a brief description of each edition's contents simply enter an address in the box provided on the homepage. All email addresses will be kept strictly confidential and only used for purposes connected with OTOR.

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